NATIONAL THREAT LANDSCAPE
STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

This assessment is intended to provide situational awareness of threats with potential national-level implications related to public order, public safety and the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. The information in this assessment is based on reporting from RCMP Divisions, law enforcement partners, searches conducted against RCMP holdings, and open source resources (current as of 25 October, 2021). The IMCIT continues to maintain visibility on emerging threats and will provide updates on a periodic or as required basis.

KEY POINTS

- The IMCIT assesses that with vaccine passports and mandates being implemented in various employment sectors and provinces in Canada, opposition to the government's response continues to grow.

- Threats to the vaccine roll out may occur in spontaneous incidents by dissenting or opportunistic individuals. The IMCIT has no new information to indicate any coordinated attempts to sabotage or disrupt the vaccine supply chain.

THREATS TO PUBLIC SAFETY

FISHERIES DISPUTE - ST. MARYS BAY, NOVA SCOTIA (NS)

Potential for unauthorized fishing and increased tensions between non-Indigenous and Indigenous fishers which could impact public or officer safety.

In September of 2020, the Sipekne'katik First Nation community fishers launched a self-regulated lobster fishery that met opposition from non-Indigenous commercial fishers resulting in violence, property damage and arson.[1] In July of 2021, the Sipekne'katik launched a food, social and ceremonial fishery outside of the commercial season which was regulated by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO).[2] Since August of 2021, the Sipekne'katik transitioned to operating a self-regulated treaty lobster fishery in St. Marys Bay that harvests at various times of the year.[3] This treaty fishery operates according to Band rules, but without regulation from DFO or commercial restrictions.

There have been a number of incidents in the area throughout this reporting period:

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- On October 7, 2021, members of the Sipekne'katik community expressed concerns that DFO fishery officers were pulling up traps to mark lobster tails with a small hole as part of a new tracking compliance initiative. Sipekne'katik community members claim that this way of marking lobsters may negatively affect the health of the lobsters.[4] While there are currently no reports of conflict arising from this new initiative, this may amplify tensions between Sipekne'katik community members and DFO.

s.37 [redacted]

Currently there is no information to suggest public order events will occur in NS as they have in the past,[9] or that there could be spillover into other parts of the country. The IMCIT continues to maintain visibility on the evolving situation.

OLD-GROWTH LOGGING - SOUTHWEST VANCOUVER ISLAND, BRITISH COLUMBIA (BC)
Potential for continued criminality, solidarity actions and counter-protests which could impact public or officer safety.

On October 8, 2021, the injunction prohibiting the obstruction, impediment, or interference with logging was temporarily reinstated until November 15, 2021.[10] Prior to the injunction's original expiry on September 28, 2021, the RCMP's enforcement of the injunction had resulted in 1101 arrests,[11] making it the largest act of civil disobedience in Canadian history.[12] The number of arrests and issue of old-growth logging protection has gained global attention from environmental groups. The upcoming COP26 conference[a], which will bring world leaders together to discuss climate change, will likely generate media attention related to this issue.[13]

While the injunction was expired, police were still able to patrol and arrest people in the area for committing crimes. In one case, an individual was arrested for blocking industry workers from accessing

[a] COP26 refers to Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Climate Change, which will be held October 31 to November 12 in Scotland to discuss nations meeting climate targets. https://www.ctvnews.ca/climate-and-environment/cop26-glossary-understand-the-terms-issues-at-un-climate-summit-1.5627369

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forestry roads in the area.[14] The same individual was arrested again the following day for breaching their conditions after being located in the same area.[15] Since the injunction was reinstated, the total number of individuals arrested since May 2021 is now 1129.[16]

Social media activity reveals that a fundraiser has been organized[b] in anticipation of the winter weather conditions and preparation for a long-term presence in the area.[17] Updates from E Division indicate that some of the structures and obstacles placed across forestry roads are complex and dangerous[18] and involve piles of sticks reinforced with rebar and industry steel cables where individuals secure themselves in locking devices underneath the logs.[19]

The IMCIT assessment remains that, based on social media, protesters plan to remain in the area and any arrests made by officers will be perceived negatively and could spark solidarity actions across the country.

COASTAL GASLINK PIPELINE (CGL) OPPOSITION – MORICE RIVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA
Potential for criminality and potential for Canada-wide actions.

Open source information indicates that on September 25, 2021, road access to CGL's drill site at Morice River was impeded, with a series of blockades put in place and the drill site occupied.[20] Morice River is known as "Wedzin Kwa" to the Wet'suwet'en and there is opposition by hereditary chiefs to CGL drilling under the river to install a pipeline. The Wedzin Kwa is a major spawning ground for salmon and is a food and water source for the Wet'suwet'en.[21]

- On October 6, 2021, an international call for solidarity was posted online for the week of October 9-15, 2021[22] where individuals were encouraged to take action by going to Wedzin Kwa, hosting or attending solidarity rallies, pressuring federal and provincial governments through letter writing or phone calls, or by fundraising or donating. Open source information indicates that peaceful protests and banner drops took place in several Canadian cities in response to the call, as well as a number of incidents:

- On October 9, approximately 40 people blockaded five parallel rail lines outside a CN rail yard in Point Saint Charles, Montreal for more than an hour and a half to support the Wet'suwet'en fight to defend their territory against the CGL pipeline.[23] Comments on the communication posted in relation to the action stated, *"We expect this to be the first in a series of actions in solidarity with Wet'suwet'en land defenders as they brace for another RCMP invasion of their territory"*. There were no arrests associated with this action.

- On October 15, open source information reported that the CN railway in St-Édouard-de-Maskinongé, was blocked for a little over an hour.[24]

- On October 15, according to information posted on an anarchist blog[25] and on other social media sites[26], an unannounced port blockade took place at the Clark and Hastings entrance to

[b] The fundraiser exceeded the goal of $20,000 within 7 days of activity.
https://fundrazr.com/winterizemobilize?ref=ab_3bySi1ON8KO3bySi1ON8KO

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the Port of Vancouver for over five hours. Information from E DIV indicates that three people were arrested as a result of this action.

Prior to the call out for a week of solidarity, an anarchist blog posted an anonymous communication indicating that a Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) location in Montreal was vandalized in solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en on the evening of September 30th (the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation)[27]. RBC is an investor in the CGL pipeline. A "Day of Action" at RBC locations is currently planned for October 29, 2021 in several Canadian cities by environmental groups.[28] RBC locations were chosen to *"demand fossil banks like RBC stop funding fossil fuels".*[29] Currently, there is no adverse information associated with this day of action.

In February of 2020, solidarity actions in support of Wet'suwet'en led to blockades of rail lines throughout Canada. Based on the responses in 2020, as well as the most recent week of solidarity which resulted in actions across Canada, future calls for solidarity are likely to result in actions across the country.

CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUES - NATIONAL MOBILIZATION
Potential for criminality and potential for Canada-wide actions.

On October 16, 2021, the Extinction Rebellion (XR) Vancouver[c] group began 14 days of action to demand governments take action on climate change.[30] Thus far, 17 individuals have been arrested in relation to these events.[31] Most of the tactics by the group to date have included traffic disruptions at intersections, however a disruption planned for October 25, 2021 indicates a protest is planned at the Vancouver International Airport.[32] The Extinction Rebellion group in Toronto is also advertising an event for Pearson International Airport on the same date.[33] At this time, no further coordinated Canada-wide actions appear to be planned; however, the RBC actions in support of the Wet'suwet'en planned for October 29th have attracted interest from several environmental groups.

Due to increased attention to the issue of climate change, the easing of COVID-19 restrictions in several provinces, and the upcoming COP26 event, the IMCIT assesses that public order events related to climate issues are expected to continue sporadically.

"WHITE LIVES MATTER" MARCHES AND POSTERING CAMPAIGN
Potential for solidarity actions and counter-protests that could impact public or officer safety.

"White Lives Matter" (WLM) public order events have been advertised internationally since March of 2021. Although WLM posters have been observed in several Canadian cities, to date, public order events remain confined to Ontario with protests occurring monthly since April of 2021, attracting minimal participation and no reported incidents of violence. The most recent protest occurred on October 16th;

[c] Extinction Rebellion (XR) originated in the UK and Canadian chapters have been present since 2018. XR believes mass civil disobedience is needed to inspire change and prefers to operate in big cities where decision makers are located. XR actions often include behaviour which will lead to arrest in order to show personal sacrifice for the cause in an effort to make the public take notice. Tactics of international XR groups include property damage and mass bridge and road blockades. International XR groups are known for initiating protests that span multiple days for maximum disruption and depletion of police resources.

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the next date of protest is planned for November 13th. According to the Toronto WLM group, the location and time will be announced closer to the date.

Open source queries and information from law enforcement partners for this reporting period yielded no specific intelligence to indicate WLM events pose a risk to public safety from protesters or counter-protesters.

ANTI-LOCKDOWN/ANTI-MASK/ANTI-VACCINATION PROTESTS
Potential for public health restriction violations. Potential for protests that could impact public or officer safety.

The IMCIT assesses that, with vaccine passports and mandates being implemented in various employment sectors and provinces in Canada, opposition to federal and provincial government responses continues to grow. This opposition is attracting both ideologically motivated individuals[d] as well as people who would not typically attend protests or post political views online. People who have been impacted adversely by vaccine mandates, or perceive they will be impacted adversely in the future are also becoming involved. Based on upcoming deadlines for proof-of-vaccination requirements, there is concern over certain factors, such as job losses for unvaccinated individuals and the fear of forced vaccination of children that could become a potential flash point for an act of violence.

There are also individual concerns with staffing shortages that could occur in certain professions. For example, Quebec recently delayed the October 15, 2021 deadline mandating vaccines for all health care workers until November 15, 2021, citing that there would have been a "considerable reduction" in health care in Quebec had the date not been postponed.[34] The IMCIT assesses that staffing shortages that could affect the care of patients could form grievances.

In all sectors where vaccines are mandated, the IMCIT has observed opposition. The IMCIT assess that opposition to vaccines by individuals in certain professions is being used to add legitimacy to conspiracy theories promoted by ideologically motivated individuals.

News reports about pharmaceutical companies seeking approval for the use of vaccines on children aged five to eleven[35] have resulted in increased online chatter in the anti-vaccine space, indicating a perception of future forced vaccination of children in schools and potential consequences for parents who refuse to vaccinate their children. The IMCIT assesses that there is a potential for heightened hostility once vaccines are approved for younger populations.

Weekly protests, which have been ongoing since April of 2020, continue to occur throughout Canada. Typically, these protests occurred on weekends, however this reporting period saw additional protests added to weekdays in several Canadian cities. Examples of incidents include the following:

- In provinces where vaccine passports have been implemented, protesters have entered businesses in small groups to defy public health orders.

[d] Ideologically motivated individuals does not necessarily mean ideologically motivated criminality or ideologically motivated violence. The non-criminal ideologically motivated space includes expressions of racism, bigotry, misogyny, and individuals engaging in lawful protests.

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- Frontline workers in the retail and restaurant industries have reported receiving threats and harassment from patrons who disagree with proof-of-vaccination policies.[36] Protesters have had "street picnics" where they bring their own food and sit on the street directly outside restaurants enforcing vaccine passports.

- Doctors have reported receiving threats at their homes and in healthcare settings from individuals holding anti-vaccination and/or anti-mask beliefs, leading a physicians' regulatory body to release guidelines on dealing with threatening or aggressive situations.[37] Protesters have also rallied outside hospitals to protest against vaccine mandates for health care workers.[38] Public order events outside healthcare settings have drawn the ire of public officials, leading Nova Scotia[39] to join BC, Alberta, and Quebec in introducing legislation to ban protests at hospitals.

- On October 13, 2021, rocks with anti-vaccination messaging were thrown through the windows of a pharmacy and a restaurant in Cambridge, ON.[40]

In terms of upcoming events, the following has been observed:

- A vocal personality in the anti-vaccine/anti-lockdown/anti-mask space is promoting a "Rosa Parks Challenge" and encouraging his supporters to occupy public transit on October 30, 2021 to protest proof of vaccine requirements.[41] The individual has also made comments about disrupting four major airports in Canada on November 7, 2021 by having a convoy of people drive around the airport in circles in an effort to divert flights and cost airlines billions of dollars.[42] Currently, no specific planning has been identified; however, the individual has a substantial social media following on several platforms.

- In Ontario, an individual is attempting to plan an event from November 1st to November 6th to block major routes around the Greater Toronto Area. At the time of this writing, the level of support and formal organizing around this event is unclear.

- A "World Wide Demonstration for Freedom" being advertised for November 20, 2021. This will be the fifth event of this nature, which typically attracts slightly higher numbers than the weekly protests.

The IMCIT assesses that anti-vaccination/anti-lockdown/anti-mask narratives and public order events will continue to sustain the current momentum.

THREATS TO THE COVID-19 VACCINE ROLLOUT

Potential threats to the vaccine rollout may occur spontaneously by dissenting or opportunistic individuals. For example, on September 29, 2021, a man glued the doors of a vaccine clinic shut in Langford, BC.[43] A school board in Winnipeg, MB recently requested that their school facilities be

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excluded from use for COVID-19 vaccination out of concerns for safety, amid the emergence of local anti-vaccination petitions.[44]

With respect to proof of vaccines, healthcare workers have reported attempts from patients to bribe medical staff with varying sums of money into providing them with proof of vaccination records without actually administering any vaccine.[45] Fake vaccine certificates are also abundantly for sale online.[46] While there are numerous reports of fraudulent vaccine certification schemes, these are unlikely to affect the roll out of the legitimate vaccine supply. The IMCIT has no new information to indicate any coordinated attempts to sabotage or disrupt the vaccine supply chain or its transport.

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Approved by: Director, Directorate of Strategic Intelligence, Federal Policing National Intelligence

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